

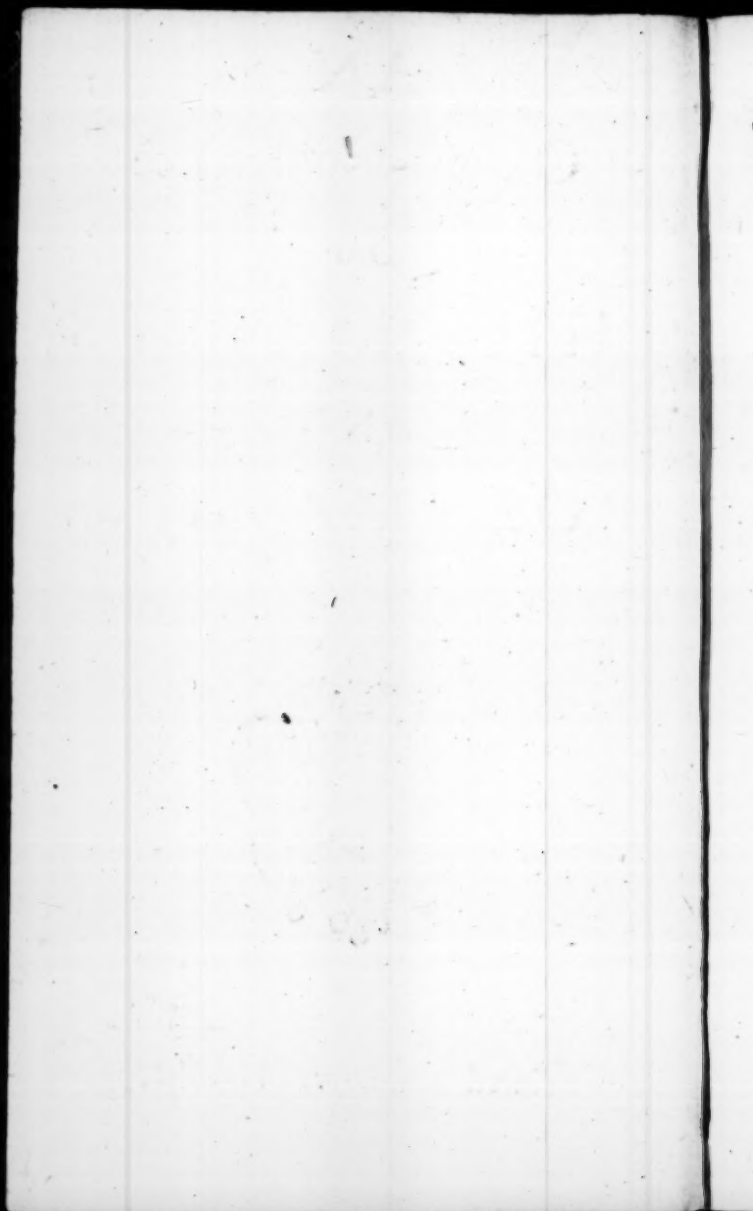
AN  
Oxford-Conference  
OF  
PHILOMATHES  
AND  
POLYMATHES.

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## Philomathes, Polymathes.

Phil.



Ave you, *Polymathes*. You are alwaye in your Books: What have you there?

Pol. A new Tract, entitled, *A modest Reply to a modest Plea*, of three sheets. But *multa paucis*, Heres much in little: enough me-thinks to incline people to more favour towards Ministers and Vniversities; and to take off their edge against them both. For indeed both must either stand or fall together.

Phil. Have you seen the *Plea* it self?

Pol. Yes, yes, and read part of it, about the Clergy and the Vniversities, and I believe it had been largely answered before this by some of our learned men, but that they remember what Tacitus said of Reproaches *spreta exolescunt*, they dye quickly, If they be despised.

Phil. But such kind of Pamphlets are very greedily read now adayes: and therefore it seems fit they should be answered, at least in a succinct civil manner. It is good to own the Truth publicly

likely upon all occasions, and speak it boldly in opposition to such seducers.

*Pol.* 'Twas not ill done, whosoever gave this pious suffrage to a righteous Cause. Take the Answer with you and peruse it at your leisure. Now lets walk and discourse of other matters,

*Phil.* These are fair and pleasant walks belonging to your Colledge.

*Pol.* There are as good in divers other Colledges. Our Founders have not only provided for our necessities, but our delight too. And truly I know not whether our Walks be more delightfull, or more profitable. For here we preserve our health by exercising the body, and improve our learning by Scholer-like Conferences.

*Phil.* *Felices nimium ! O Polymathes !* May Scholars ever enjoy this happinesse, and be ever thankfull for it. For my part, since I came to Oxford, I think my self in the sweetest place of the world. And the more, because of the excellent Sermons I so often hear.

*Pol.* I am glad you value them. And truly, even our young Divines, many of them, come off singularly well. But this morning I observed you at *St. Maryes* taking notes very earnestly from the good Doctor there.

*Phil.* That Doctor I have heard my Father commend for his piety, learning, industry and modesty, and he would say, never any Professor of his age, equal to him in all these, sit'd the Chair.

*Pol.*

Pol. Right! But *Phylomathes*, do not you hereafter, as some of our young Graduates do, run abroad with your Notes taken at *St. Maries*; and preach them in the Country.

Phil. Sir, my Father, who hath charged me to gather Notes and give him account, will never suffer me to thrust my self into that holy Office, but (if God at length make me capable of it) enter upon it in an orderly way.

Pol. Well! But let us leave this, and talk a little of our humane studies and polite literature, without which whosoever offers at preaching, goes about sacred work *illotis manibus*.

Phil. I shall be glad to hear you discourse of polite Learning. for I was advised by my Tutor to get into your company, as oft as I could, to that end: wherefore pray oblige me, who confess I have little skill, but (I thank God) a very good affection thereunto.

Pol. Love, you know, conquers all things. It cannot be expected from one of 14. out of the Country, to come as well furnisht, as they that are sent from your great Schools, and at about 18, are first admitted in the University, as I was. But, it hath been observed, that some of us, though we come rich in learning from the Grammar School, prove but mean fellows in the Schools of Philosophy: whether it be, because in confidence and pride of our forwardness above others, we neglect our studies here, or because our fine Poetry and Oratory steals us away from the more rough and crabbed study of Logic.

*Phil.* You are pleas'd to say so, but I am sure you have no reason to speak this of your self. For I see in what esteem you are, not onely for your polite and criticall learning, but for your exactnesse and subtilty in all disputations. Neither can I conceive, but that the best Grammarians will prove the best Logicians; I mean not in the Sophistical barbarous way: but (as my Tutor hath told me) in the way of *Aristotle* and the Ancient Interpretors of him. And I have been told, that his Poetry & Rhetorick, are none of the worst Books of *Aristotle* himself, that grand Logician and Philosopher. As for me; I am, this my first year, to let Logick alone, and employ my time in Classick Authors, Greek & Latine, with a little mixture of Arithmetick and Geometry, and the use of the Globe, and a little of Musick, both vocal and instrumental. But next year, have at your Logick, and your *sic probo*.

*Pol.* Very good: And I pray you what Authors are you now upon for your Latine Tongue?

*Phil.* At present, I am reading over *Phillip Melancthon's* Epistles; and *Seneca's*. For my Tutor tells me, I must so honour the Ancient Writers; as not to neglect those of latter times.

*Pol.* I expected rather you would have mentioned *Cicero*: but indeed *Melancthon* may well be commended to you and to all Students: a Man that was in the last age the great Restorer of Learning in *Germany*; insomuch that I have  
seen

seen him stiled in the Title-leaf of some of his Books, *præceptor totius Germaniæ*. And besides his learning, he was a man of a most mild and sweet temper, and one that will make his Readers such.

*Phil.* His Epistles are plain and easie for me: in such a low style as he loved to write, though he was so great a Master of all Learning, condescending, I think, on purpose to the lower capacities of such as I am. And as the style, so the matter of them is very agreeable to a young Student. *Cicero's* Epistles are fitter for a Statesmans reading, some say, than for a raw Scholar, being written to great persons (most of them) about State-Affairs. But *Melanchthons's* are most about the Common-wealth of Learning.

*Pol.* I must profess my self much delighted with the Epistles of *Melanchthon*, *Politian*, *Erasmus*, and after them of *Scaliger*, *Casaubon*, *Lipsius*, *Sarravins*, *Grotius*, Which are the familiar Conferences of these Learned men about books and studies; and you will find a great deal of pleasure and profit in those Books: especially you will get a good judgement in the affaires of Learning and knowledge of good Authors. But to return to *Cicero*, his Epistles are usually read by young Scholars for the *Roman* Language (whereof he is the most absolute pattern) and for the words rather than the matter. And as I remember, *Camerarius*, in the Preface to his Edition of those Epistles, speaks of a friend of his  
much

much admir'd for his fluency and purity of the Latine tongue, who said, He owed whatsoever faculty he had in speaking good Latine, to his frequent reading over of that Book. And I wonder our senior Scholars do so depreciate that, and the other works of this renowned Roman Consul, that had (as one saith of him) *Ingenium par Imperio Romano.*

*Phil.* But to return to my *Melanchthon*, I must profess to you, I am exceedingly taken, as with the simplicity of his style, so more especially, with his assiduous diligence in advancing of learning, and commending of poor Scholars to worthy Patrons and Benefactors.

*Pol.* It is also observable in him (which I mention with a reflection upon our own times) the compassionate regard he had to the Afflictions of the Church in those dayes, and the Consolations and pious Counsels and endeavours of peace, that render those Epistles the more precious and dear unto us. But methinks *Seneca* is not An Author proper for you, being our Master *Quintilian* hath banisht him out of the School of Eloquence.

*Phil.* *Seneca* is not commended to me for his style or eloquence (I have heard he is of a kind of inimitable Eloquence, unlesse one have the wit of *Lipsius*) but for his matter, among all humane Authors he hath the preheminance for precepts of moral vertues. In which respect his Scholar and good friend *Iustus Lipsius* honours him



him with the Title of *Romanus sapiens*, the wise man of Rome, and truly, I think, far above all the seven of Greece that are so much talked of.

Pol. From him indeed you may gather excellent acute sentences to adorn your Themes and Declamations with, as with bright Gemms: and (which is a thing of farre greater benefit) from him you may lay up in memory most usefull precepts for the ordering of your passions, and for the government of your life, that neither prosperity may deceive you by her smiles, nor adversity deject you by her frowns. But for style and for words, both for choice and composure, sure you were best to apply your self to *Cuero*, remembring that of the great Master *Quintilian*, *Is se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero placere cepit*. Tis a good argument of proficiency, to be in love with *Cicero*.

Phil. My Father hath planted in me berimes a love and respect for *Cicero*, above all *Roman* Authors: but I find he is too wise and too weighty yet for my childhood, and I am glad he is reserved for my riper years. I am far from the opinion of some of my Companions here, who, because they read *Tullies Offices*, &c. at School. thinks the Author below them, when they are promoted to the Vniversity.

Pol. Tis a common errour, that, in our *Academicks*, and of very ill consequence. That book *de Officiis*, was written by *Cuero* to his Son at *Athens*, the most famous Vniversity, and therefore should seem most proper for us here. And  
surely,

surely, it is so much prized by wise men, that (as I have somewhere read) the greatest Counsellour of *Q. Eliz.* always carried it in his bosom, as a Counsellour to him. Our Doctor *Humphrey*, a man that knew well how to judge of Books, hath given this Elogy of the Author in his *De Nobilitate*: *Ciceronis officia nunquam de manibus deponenda, & quicquid Divinus ille vir scripserit penitus evolvendum.* These are his very words, as far I can remember. And you may see a notable passage of *Andreas Dreſubius*, a man of great Note in *Thur.*'s Elogies. *Tavius Tullianæ eloquentiæ suæ admirator siue sectator fuit, ut totum Ciceronem ter propria manu descripserit.*

*Phil.* I thank you for this noble commendation of *Tully*, and I shall not be unmindfull of it. But what advise will you give me in the reading of him?

*Pol.* Your Tutor will best advise you: yet will I tell you the opinion of *Mr. Ascham*, one that was Reader to *Qu. Eliz.* in the Greek and Latin Tongue: who high extolleth double Translation: and gives an example of a yong Gentleman he taught at Court, in a short time to write good Latin, by being exercised, in translating *Tully de Amicitia*, first into English, and then, the Latin Book being laid aside, again into Latin. This exercise will bring you, saith he, to a good choice of words, and to a right composition of them. In which two consisteth Latin elegance. You will not repent of reading over the whole Book, when you can meet with it.

*Phil.*

*Phil.* I think, I have it in my study ; but it hath hitherto been neglected ; I will upon your commendation read it diligently. But I must tell you of one Author more, that is my *Vade mecum* for the Latin Tongue , and that is old *Terence*.

*Pol.* You have named the Prince of Latin Elegance : one that is depreciated too, and little read by many of us, because he is torn by children at the Grammar School. But indeed *Terence* is fit for men. Yea , and he must be a learned man; that can discern all the beauties in him.

*Phil.* My Tutor lately shewed me the Book you now cited, *Thuan's* Elogies of learned men, how marvellously and eminent, And a long experienced Master was affected to *Terence*, namely *Johannes Rivius*, of whom he saith , he was *Latine linguae ex Terentii praeipue fabulis, quas & notis illustravit, hauriendae & addiscendae suis auctor & hortator assiduus*. And in *Henisius* Epistle before his neat Edition of *Terence*, That the incomparable *Joseph Scaliger*, even in his old age, had *Terence* often in his hands, and read him then, when he knew almost all things, with greater delight than ever.

*Pol.* The truth is , your Criticks do not only praise the Book for eloquence and propriety of the Latin ( being such as the Gentry of Rome then used ) but for the manners and humours of several sorts of persons there represented. They look upon it as *speculum vis communis*. And  
for

for this reason too, that you may acquaint your self with the manners and fashions of the world (without going out of your study) tis not amiss, if you sometimes recreate your self with some of our English Comedies, not inferiour to the Ancient, but only in time.

*Phil.* I have no acquaintance with them yet, but I easily believe there is good use of them in both respects, to polish the English Tongue, and shew the wayes of Vertue and Vice. What Writers in this kind will you commend unto me?

*Pol.* O I could talk a whole a day to you of learned *Johnson*, ingenuous *Fletcher*, smooth *Randolph*, Divine *Cartwright*: but hark! the Bell calls to the Schools, and I am to be examined to day for my degree of Batchelor, which I am to take next Lent. We must adjourn till next week: for once a week I shall be glad of your Company, to confer with you. Pray, fail not.

*Phil.* I cannot receive a greater favour from you. I shall gladly wait on you, being assured I shall still return *Doctior & melior*. Those strict Examinations by your Regent Masters I have heard of, and it will make me follow my study the more diligently, that I may attain to the honour of a Degree in due time. But pray, in what are you examined?

*Pol.* In all the liberal Arts. And if the like Examination were used before your new Preachers be suffered to climb the Pulpit, the Country would not be so pester'd with them, nor Religion so disgrac'd.

*Phil.*

*Pol.* We see what is the want of Church-Government. If Schools have need of good Discipline, hath not the Church too? And if one cannot be a Batchelor of Arts without so much preparation and examination, shall any one presume to be a Preacher of Gods Word without being first prepared, tryed and approved duly, by those to whom this care properly belongs.

*Pol.* 'Tis easier to complain than redress. But I must away. *Adieu.*

*Phil.* I will not detain you, You are for the Schools, and I am for my Study. Next week, you say, I shall again be happy in your further Conference.

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**F I N I S.**

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